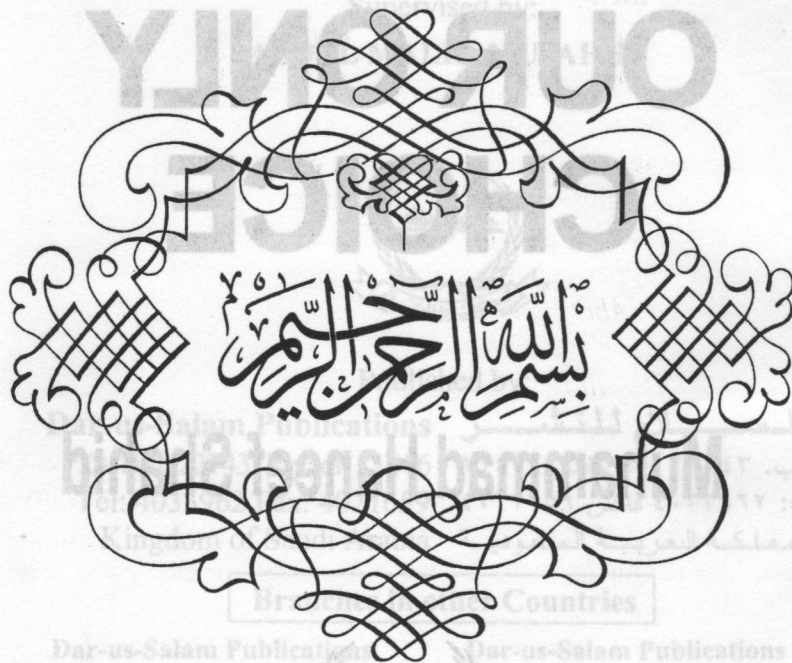


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In the Name of Allah, the Most
Beneficent, the Most Merciful

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From the Qur'ân and Ahadith

﴿فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصْعَدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ أَلْجَسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“And whomsoever Allah wills to guide, He opens his breast to Islam, and whomsoever He wills to send astray, He makes his breast closed and constricted, as if he is climbing up to the sky. Thus Allah puts the wrath on those who believe not.” (Surah Al-An'am, 6:125)^[1]

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And had your Lord willed, those on earth would have believed, all of them together. So, will you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) then, compel mankind, until they become believers.” (Surah Yunus, 10:99)^[2]

﴿قُلْ إِنْ أَلَّ اللَّهُ يُضِلْ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِ إِلَى أَتَابٍ ۝ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَنَطَمِنُ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمِئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ۝ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ طُوبَى لَهُمْ وَحُسْنُ مَتَابٍ﴾

“Say: Verily, Allah sends astray whom He wills and guides unto Himself those who turn to Him in repentance. Those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest! Those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), and work righteousness, *Tuba* (it means all kinds of happiness, or name of a tree in Paradise) is for them and a beautiful place of (final) return.” (Surah Ar-Ra'd, 13:27-29)^[3]

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ﴾

“And say: ‘The truth is from your Lord.’ Then whosoever wills, let him believe, and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve.” (Surah Al-Kahf, 18:29)^[4]

﴿رُبَّمَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“Perhaps (often) will those who disbelieve wish that they were Muslims (those who have submitted themselves to Allah’s Will in Islam - Islamic Monotheism, this will be on the Day of Resurrection when they will see the disbelievers going to Hell and the Muslims going to Paradise).” (Surah Al-Hijr, 15:2)^[5]

It is obligatory to have belief in the Messengership of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Allah’s Messenger said:

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ! لَا يَسْمَعُ بِي أَحَدٌ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ يَهُودِيٍّ وَلَا نَصْرَانِيٍّ، ثُمَّ يَمُوتُ وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِالَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ، إِلَّا كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ».

“By Him (Allah) in Whose Hand Muhammad’s soul is, there is none from amongst the Jews and the Christians (of these present nations) who hears about me and then dies without believing in the Message which I have been sent (i.e., Islamic Monotheism), but he will be from the dwellers of the (Hell) Fire.”^[6]

^[1-5] The Noble Qur'ân : Interpretation of the meanings of The Noble Qur'ân in the English Language; a summarized Version of At-Tabari, Al-Qurtubi & Ibn Kathir with comments from Sahih Al-Bukhari, by Dr. M. Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali & Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Riyadh, Dar-us-Salam Publications, 1994, pp. 331, 450, 377.

^[6] Sahih Muslim, the Book of Faith, Volume 1, Chapter No. 240.

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

PREFACE

To write a preface of a book written by a reputable research scholar, acclaimed as a "Man of Letters" in his home country of Pakistan, and whose works are well-preserved in one of the world's prestigious institutions, the Library of Congress, Washington D.C., U.S.A., is indeed, a rare privilege and a great honour.

This book of Muhammad Haneef Shahid, "Why Islam is Our only Choice," is part of his lifelong career as a research scholar in the service of Islam. It is a compilation of numerous narratives about the lives, experiences, previous beliefs as well as Islamic impressions and reasons of different personalities belonging to all walks of life as to why they reverted to Islam. It includes nobles, intellectuals, dignitaries, scientists, laureates, influentials, professionals and degenerated men down to the ordinary men and women in the street. The research work is taken from divergent nationalities from the four corners of the earth and covers the span of more than two centuries to the present. They were, in fact, a group of sincere people who came to understand the meaning and purpose of their lives and have arrived at the *Ultimate Truth*, that somehow, 'we belong to only one Creator and to Him alone is our return'. They are convinced that the present life is only transitory and that there will be a day of reckoning, when deeds will be judged according to the terms of the Omnipotent Creator Allah — the Eternal and Absolute, the Maker and Keeper of all creations.

"Did you think that We had created you in play (without any purpose), and that you would not be brought back to Us (for account)?" (*Surah An-Nûr*, 23:115)

"And We created not the heaven and the earth and all that is between them without purpose! That is the consideration of

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

INTRODUCTION

We welcome and congratulate, from the core of our heart, those of our brothers and sisters who entered the fold of Islam. May Allah the Almighty bless them! They, of course, are very fortunate and lucky that Allah, the Creator of the universe, has bestowed His favours upon them:

“And whomsoever Allah wills to guide, He opens his breast to Islam; and whomsoever He wills to send astray, He makes his breast closed and constricted as if he is climbing up to the sky. Thus Allah puts the wrath on those who believe not.” (*Surah Al-An'am* 6:125)

When Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him - صلى الله عليه وسلم) came out with the Message of Oneness of Allah, they were the early Companions who readily and without any hesitation responded to the call. They did not embrace Islam with any selfish ends or motives. It is as clear as broad daylight that at the advent of Islam it was a very critical period for the Muslims. In those days to enter the fold of Islam meant to invite troubles, hardships and miseries for oneself. But they accepted Islam without any fear of troubles and atrocities. It is a sign of true Faith that when a man accepts it, believing it to be true and righteous, he holds to it with rock like firmness, under all odd circumstances, calamities, hardships and trials. So the Companions of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) embraced Islam in perfect sincerity and with true heart, with the result they endured all the hardships and afflictions for the sake of Allah and His Messenger Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). They remained steadfast in their Belief and as a result of their sacrifice Allah bestowed upon them His bounties:

“As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e. Allah's religion —

Islamic Monotheism). And verily, Allah is with the *Muhsinun* (good doers).” (*Surah Al-Ankabut*, 29:69)

and the response of the ‘true believers’ was very thought-provoking and heart-rendering. Allah says in the Noble Qur'an:

“And why should we not put our trust in Allah while He indeed has guides us our ways. And we shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you may cause us, and in Allah (Alone) let those who trust, put their trust.” (*Surah Ibrahim*, 14:12)

But those who were misguided and went astray, they rejected the call of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) although he invited them to *Tauhid* according to the injunctions of the Qur'an:

“Invite (mankind, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islam) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Inspiration and the Qur'an) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Path, and He is the Best Aware of those who are guided.” (*Surah An-Nahl*, 16:125)

Allah, the Knower of all things, addressing the jinns and men said:

“O you assembly of jinns and mankind! ‘Did not there come to you Messengers from amongst you, reciting unto you My Verses and warning you of the meeting of this Day of yours?’ They will say: ‘We bear witness against ourselves.’ It was the life of this world that deceived them. And they will bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers.” (*Surah Al-An'am*, 6:130)

If Allah had wanted and willed, He could have easily compelled everyone to accept Islam and strictly follow it, but He did not like to do so. He granted everyone freedom of choice. He sent Prophets for the guidance of mankind, but did not force or compel human beings to accept and follow them. Man was left

God will perfect His Light

I would like one copy of the *Review* sent to some English man or woman who, you think, might be interested in Islam, and to remove thereby a part of the barrier of lies that has been built around our Holy Faith by people of other religions, especially the Christian missionaries. 'They wish to put out the Light of God with their mouths, but God will perfect His Light'. I have been living in the Faith of Islam, now 40 years having been converted^[1], and made my first *Hajj* in the year 1311 A.H., and have constantly been working amongst my European friends to clear the Faith of Islam from the lies that have been built up like a wall around it by its enemies. I am certain that from the first days of Islam, the preachers of other faiths were afraid that if the truth about our Holy Religion were known, there would be very few that would adhere any longer to those other religions which Islam came to supplant.^[2]

(Al-Haj) Abdullah Fadhil Williamson

[1] In place of the words 'convert' 'converted' or 'conversion' we use 'revert' 'reverted' or 'reversion', as according to our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم every child is born on Islam, but his parents convert him to their respective religions. So whenever a non-Muslim enters into the fold of Islam, we use the words 'revert', 'reverted' or 'reversion' etc., for him — Editor.

[2] *Islamic Review*. June 1933, Vol. 21, No. 6, p. 199,200.

Islam alone can bring peace to this world

I feel that I must write and express my heartfelt thanks to all my Muslim brothers who, on my embracing Islam have so kindly written or sent telegrams to me. I appreciate their good wishes more than my words can convey.

After the last war, when the world waded through streams of blood, I thought that all peace and goodwill was at an end but the fact that my brethren across the seven seas are so willing to extend a hand of friendship brings a message of hope and good cheer to me. This has proved to me more than anything else, that Islam alone can bring peace to this world.^[1]

C.E. Abdullah Archibald W. Hamilton

Selsey (Sussex)

January 8, 1924.

Islam is a Light

A search after Truth in matters spiritual has shown me that Islam is a Light which dispels the gloom of doubt and misgiving, a Faith which through its appeal to an acknowledgment of a simple and eternal Truth, and its revelation of the love of God, and His Wisdom and Justice, brings comfort and strength to the soul.

May the pure Light of Islam, by the grace of God, spread far and wide, and its peace prevail.^[2]

C.G.H. Abdur-Rahman

[1] *Islamic Review*. February 1924. Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 77,78.

[2] *Islamic Review*. February 1924, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 78.

Islam satisfies the spiritual craving of intellectual humanity

On Friday, the 5th of August, I was converted and became a member of the great worldwide religious fraternity of Islam. Prior to my conversion, I followed Christianity as a unit of the Roman Catholic persuasion; but owing to the ritualism practised and the dogmatism imposed, coupled with, what I may with justice term, the Pantheon of lesser deities (the Calendar of Saints), I found myself seeking another avenue for my religious expression. Protestantism, Methodism and the minor Christian sects drove me into a nebulous state, and I became apathetic as far as religion was concerned. But the innate urge to worship God truthfully goaded me, and I applied myself to the study of Christian metaphysics. In metaphysical Christianity I found some solace, but transcendentalism often conflicts with logic, and I needed something rational. Fortunately, I came in contact with Mr. Abdur-Rahman and some other Muslim gentlemen who, upon my asking, readily placed all Islamic literature available at my disposal. Incidentally I became deeply impressed with the tenets of Islam. I diligently studied Islam and compared its teachings with those taught to me formerly, and finally arrived at the blessed conclusion that the Religion preached by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) is the only one which stands out prominently as connotative of the marvellous grandeur of God and one which satisfies the spiritual craving of intellectual humanity.^[1]

Abu Bakr Beaumont-Benjamin
(Formerly **Roderick Leofric Beaumont-Benjamin**)

^[1] *Islamic Review*. January-February 1933, Vol. 21, Nos. 1-2, pp. 26,27.

In the Qur'ân, there is a plain direction for everyone; it is logic and no mysticism

[Mr. Ahmad A. Allan was born in New Zealand some weeks after his father's death. He was brought to England soon after and was educated at private schools. Being the only child, was left much to his own devices - became an omnivorous reader as a schoolboy, acquired a copy of Sale's Qur'ân and was much struck with it — at that early age and could see through and was thoroughly disgusted with the hypocrisy of those professing Christianity and their leaders. Of recent years, he has studied the Qur'ân a great deal — therein is 'a plain direction for everyone'; it is logic and no mysticism the best commentary on the Qur'ân is: It requires none to teach and illustrate its meanings (so read it with an unbiased mind all you who wish to know the truth and seek guidance —*Editor*].

It must not be taken that I am 'renegading' from any creed, for, as a child, I received no particular religious instruction at school; the Scriptures and the Gospel were just used as a daily reading lesson, and not taught otherwise. I mention this, as I know converts often are looked upon with suspicion and contempt, particularly by the Osmanlis.

I have not been photographed since a boy as I had an idea that it was rather against the law (*Shariat*).

I never followed any particular creed. I think, when a child, I used to be occasionally sent to church for respectability's sake, but had a furious and instinctive dislike for its rituals, not being able to understand anything that I used to hear there.^[1]

Ahmad A. Allan

^[1] *Islamic Review*. September 1931, Vol. 19, No. 9, P. 344

Chapter Two:

a) Views of the Reverts in brief about Islam

Islam guides humanity in the daily workday life

I would like to say that whereas Islam guides humanity in the daily workday life, the presentday so-called Christianity, indirectly in theory and invariably in practice, teaches its followers, it would see, "to pray" to God on Sundays and to "prey" on His creatures for the rest of the week.^[1]

Sir Abdullah Archibald Hamilton

Sussex, England

Islam is indeed what I wanted!

It is in the belief that in it, I have at last, found the True Religion which brings peace and contentment, that I have turned to Islam.

I read books on almost every kind of faith until I came to Islam, and the more I read of Islam, the more certain I became that I had found something which was more convincing to me in the nature of what I was looking for, than any I had tried before.

Having then decided that Islam was indeed what I wanted, I realized that I must find someone to whom I could appeal for help and advice. It now remains for me to do my utmost to become a true and good follower of Islam.^[2]

Abdur-Rahman Stanley Anyan

England

^[1] *Islamic Review*. February 1924, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 77.

^[2] *Islamic Review*. April 1936, Vol. 24, No. 4, pp. 139,140.

- for instance, belief in the Unity^[1] of God. This is why it appeals to me.

The religion of Islam has given me peace and happiness such as I never had before.^[2]

Miss Joan Fatima

If Britain and Europe were converted to Islam, they would again be powerful forces for good

There is no version of Christianity which is really satisfactory. Christians believe that because of the fall of Adam and Eve, all human beings are born in a state of original sin, and are unable by their own actions to merit Heaven. Muslims, however, do not believe that people are punished for the sin of Adam and Eve. They believe that all human beings are born of innocence, and can only lose their hope of Heaven by their own sins when they are old enough to be guilty of deliberate wrong-doing.

If Britain and Europe were converted to Islam, they would again be powerful forces for good. British and European Muslims are some of the best.^[3]

Khadija F.R. Fezoui
England

^[1] 'Unity' is not the proper word to use, instead the word 'Oneness' describes monotheism in the real sense — *Editor*.

^[2] *Islamic Review*. January 1930, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 18.

^[3] *Islam, the First and Final Religion*. p. 146, 147.

Chapter Two

b) Views of the Reverts in brief about the Noble Qur'ân

The Noble Qur'ân contains what every soul mostly requires

Since my youth, I have been greatly impressed by Islamic civilization in all its aspects, its poetry and architecture, and very often I have told myself that a people who could give to the world so vast a treasure of beauty and significance in every branch of culture must also have attained to the highest levels both in philosophy and religion.

In my enthusiasm for Islam, I began to study all religions, from the most ancient to those of the present day, comparing each with the other, and subjecting them to very close criticism; and little by little, I became convinced that the Muslim worship was the true Religion, and that the Holy Quran contained what every soul mostly requires for its spiritual elevation.^[1]

Count Eduardo Gioja
Italy

The Christian Bible may be 'the Book nobody knows' in America, But the Qur'ân is the Book everybody reads in Islam!

The Christian Bible, being the textbook of Christianity, is a book which I have read many times. I doubt if there is a person who does not shudder while reading its pages, filled as they are

^[1] *Islamic Review*. September 1935, Vol. 23, No. 9, pp. 329, 331, 332.

And on Zilqadah 30, 1401 A.H. Khadijah was born. And now we are five in the family in which I should struggle for survival.

Despite the many misfortunes we had upon embracing Islam, we remained steadfast and firm in our Faith, and we will keep on repeating the *Kalimah* with all our hearts until the last breath.

"La ilaha illa-Allah, Muhammad-ur-Rasulullah"

O! Allah make us true Muslims according to the Principles of Islam despite the stormy days we are facing ...*Amin!*^[1]

Abdullah Colobong Mangaoang
(Formerly **Edwin C. Mangaoang**)

Why I became a Muslim?

I have always been a Muslim. I mean this not only in the sense in which the word is used in the *Qur'ân Sharif* to signify an adherent of natural religion, but very early in life I gained some realisation that Islam as generally practised was nearer to that natural religion than were the other great established religions.

It was, I think, the disparity between the Christian professions of brotherhood and the attitude engendered by the imperialist ideology, the sole glorification of English institutions, colour prejudice and the presumption of two codes of ethics ... one for Europeans and another for "those lesser breeds without the Law," which first turn my attention to the study of non-European cultures, from, however, a non-religious standpoint. I then discovered that, contrary to what I had been taught, civilisation did not end with Greece, and that, East of Greece existed a culture which had played an important part in the history of the world, a culture which had, in fact, been the means

^[1] *Minaret*. September 1984, pp. 19-24.

of handling on to Europe that heritage of Greece of which she is so justly proud and which had enriched the Greek heritage by many traits and characteristics of that Saracenic civilisation which had preserved the culture of Greece during the period of European barbarism.

It was, strangely enough, the scripture master at school who, by instilling into us the principles of the "Higher Criticism" — principles which to him confirmed their truth, awakened in me my first serious doubts as to the authenticity of the Christian scriptures. The simplicity of Islam and the certainty of the basis on which it rested (the *Qur'ân Sharif* being recognised even by the most hostile critics as being as surely the word of Muhammad as we recognise it to be the Word of God) presented a strong contrast to the shifting and uncertain character of the Christian scriptures, which come to us in a tongue alien to their first adepts and belonging to a region far removed from their original home. When, in addition, are incorporated in these scriptures things in themselves difficult to accept, things for whose inclusion there is no obvious religious reason, things taken from other sources, whose development, sometimes inside and sometimes outside Christianity, can be explained psychologically by quite human causes, one feels the need for some surer, some simpler basis on which to build one's faith and form one's life.

Islam, with its simple logical scheme of God sending His prophets from time to time to raise humanity, to tell humanity that there was but one God and that consequently humanity was one and that all men were brothers. Islam differing from the original Judaism only in that it teaches that God does not limit His mercies to any one people, supplied that basis.

Although a school-fellow, somewhat older than myself, to whom I probably owe the socialistic trend of my thoughts, did shortly afterwards try to convert me to an atheistic position, it

Islamic library with English and Arabic books, in addition, to another Institute for conducting scientific research in the light of Quran.^[1]

K. Mohammed

Doha, Qatar

Some reasons for accepting Islam

A thinking person pondering over the trend of modern thought will come at last to the conclusion that he must think for himself. There are so many schools of thought and so many methods of expression that, unless he is content to be an automaton reflecting only the opinions of his environment, and at all times ready to agree with the conventional or popular view, he must be prepared to go out into the desert and there reflect and find guidance. There alone will the thinker be able to find the inspiration which will enable him to impart his own ideas to others.

Various paths will lie before him. He has the ancient and traditional path of Roman Catholicism, with its claim of infallibility—a church which to many minds must make a powerful appeal because of its ritual, its antiquity, the vast number of adherents which it possesses all over the world and its multitudinous methods of religious activity.

He may think of Protestantism in general as according to all the right of individual expression of opinion, and of its claim that it grants liberty of conscience, thought and action; but he will find, on examination, that this is but another form of traditional belief as arbitrary and as formal as the creed which it supplanted and

often more inquisitorial than the ancient forms of intolerance and authority.

Rationalism will appeal to many minds because of its ready acceptance of modern science, its condemnation of priestcraft and the excellent service it has given in breaking down the hidebound hostility of the past to any real freedom of thought in either religion or politics. Such iconoclasm is undoubtedly necessary before the human mind can ever find freedom or an opportunity to think over new discoveries.

Socialism or communism, with their gospel of social, economic and political equality as the immediate goal of human effort, will certainly make progress if only because of the clear necessity for some new re-organization of human society which even, though it be purely materialistic as its opponents assert, yet offers a change from the chaos into which modern society has drifted in recent years, more especially since the late Great European War with its wholesale shattering of illusions, and this has led many to look for an entirely new set of human ideals, if the human race is to make any lasting progress.

In recent years many new societies have been formed, each claiming to be the new guide for which the world is looking, and the number of societies and brotherhoods now in existence, is but an expression of the time-spirit. If any or all of them could act up to their claims so eloquently and cleverly put forward, then the transition periods from one age to another would be much easier than that produced by the sudden and violent methods which the last few years would seem to have called into existence.

In Islam, however, I think, I have found the elements which make for stability. Its simplicity, its freedom from ritual, its toleration, its lack of social distinctions and racial antipathies; its freedom from mysteries, reserved entirely for the select few or the wealthy and socially influential, and its possibilities for

^[1] *Yaqaen International*. April 7, 1986, Vol. 34, No. 23, pp. 270,271.